

Application Serial No. 10/635,061

Amendment A - Reply to Non-Final Office Action of December 13, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This paper is being submitted in response to the Non-Final Office Action dated December 13, 2005, having a shortened statutory period set to expire on March 13, 2006, wherein:

Claims 1-24 were pending;

Claims 7-24 were withdrawn from consideration; and

Claim 1-6 were rejected.

Claims 1, 2, and 6 have been amended, claims 7-24 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein, and new claims 25 and 26 have been added by this amendment. Accordingly, claims 1-6 and 25-26 are currently pending in the present application. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by this amendment and respectfully request reconsideration of all pending claims in light of the amendments and remarks made herein.

Requirement for Restriction

In the present Office Action, the Examiner required that Applicants restrict previously-pending claims 1-24 for purposes of examination. Applicants have canceled claims 7-24 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein, affirming the provisional election of Group III, previously-indicated by Applicants' representative in a teleconference with the Examiner on November 17, 2005.

Objection to Applicants' Abstract

In the present Office Action, Applicants' Abstract was objected to as including the title of the invention. Applicants have amended the Abstract herein and respectfully submit that the Examiner's objection is overcome.

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Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the present Office Action, claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 4,369,946 issued to Palmer, et al., (hereinafter, "*Palmer*"). While not conceding that the Examiner's cited reference qualifies as prior art but in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicants have elected to traverse in part and in part overcome the Examiner's rejections as follows. Applicants reserve the right, for example in a continuation application, to establish that one or more of the Examiner's cited reference do not qualify as prior art with respect to the invention embodiments claimed in the above-identified application.

With regard to Applicants' claimed invention embodiments as previously submitted, the Examiner states in the present Office Action that all claim elements are taught by figures 1, 2, and 3 and the description at column 1, lines 26-32 of *Palmer*. More specifically, figure 1 of *Palmer* is referenced as teaching each element of Applicants' claim 1. With regard to Applicants' claim 2, the Examiner states that, "*Palmer et al. disclose an arcuate slot being semi-circular (figure 1, area between 20a and 20c), and spanning approximately 180 degrees (figure 1, area between 20a and 20c).*"

With regard to the Examiner's rejection of claim 2, Applicants respectfully disagree. Applicants' previously-pending claim 2 recites (by virtue of its dependency on previously-pending claim 1) a slot "having a generally arcuate shape with a closed end on one side of the body, and an open end on an opposite side of the body" wherein, "the arcuate shape of the slot is semi-circular, spans approximately 180 degrees, and is adapted to support an entire width of the flexible flat cable." (emphasis supplied)

In the present Office Action, the Examiner indicates that the slot of Applicants' claims is taught by the area between central area 16 of base 12 and arm 20 of *Palmer* and further that the "closed end" of the slot of Applicants' claim 1 is taught by portion 20c of arm 20 and the "open end" of Applicants' slot is taught by the area between tooth 26 and central flat surface 16 of base 12 of *Palmer's* teaching. As an initial matter, Applicants note that the Examiner has failed to indicate where or how *Palmer* teaches, as required by a *prima facie* case of anticipation, that the area between central area 16 of base 12 and arm 20 is "adapted to support an entire width of the flexible flat cable" as required by Applicants' claim. Applicants further submit that if the open

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and closed ends of Applicants' arcuate-shaped slot are taught by the indicated portions of Palmer as proposed by the Examiner, a span significantly larger than "approximately 180 degrees" is provided. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that *Palmer* fails to teach each element of Applicants' claim 2 and that, accordingly, that portion of the Examiner's rejection is overcome.

Notwithstanding the infirmity of the Examiner's rejection of claim 2, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite a tool for installing and removing a flexible flat cable with respect to a protective sleeve having a longitudinal opening therein, the tool comprising, *inter alia*,

a body having a longitudinal axis and a slot formed in the body longitudinally about the axis, the slot having a generally arcuate shape with a closed end on one side of the body, and an open end on an opposite side of the body, wherein...
when a longitudinal section of the flexible flat cable is located in the slot, the longitudinal section of the flexible flat cable defines a chord having a dimension that is less than a lateral dimension of the longitudinal opening of the protective sleeve (emphasis supplied)

Applicants respectfully submit that none of the cited portions of *Palmer* teach the indicated limitations of Applicants' claim. While *Palmer* does suggest that ribbon cable may be retained by the cable clips of its teaching, it fails to teach, show, or suggest the particular configuration recited by Applicants' claim 1 as amended herein. Specifically, *Palmer's* figure 6 which shows the taught cable clip accommodating a ribbon cable, shows or suggests neither the insertion of a ribbon cable beyond the juncture of central area 16 of base 12 and arm 20 nor such a ribbon cable's definition of a chord having a dimension that is "less than a lateral dimension of the longitudinal opening" of a protective sleeve as required by Applicants' claim.

Claims 2-6 and 25-26 each depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are each therefore allowable for at least those reasons stated for the allowability of that claim. Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims, as amended herein, are allowable in view of the Examiner's references of record.

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CONCLUSION

In light of the amendments and remarks made herein, Applicants submit that all pending claims are allowable and earnestly solicits notice thereof.

No extension of time for this amendment is believed to be necessary. However, in the event an extension of time is required, that extension of time is hereby requested. Please charge any fee associated with an extension of time as well as any other fee necessary to further the prosecution of this application and credit any overpayment to **IBM CORPORATION DEPOSIT ACCOUNT No. 09-0449**.

Respectfully submitted,



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